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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 000137

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DEPT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/RA, AND SCA/A  
DEPT PASS AID/ANE  
NSC FOR HARRIMAN  
TREASURY FOR LMCDONALD, JCIORCIANI, AND ABAUKOL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/08/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [EFIN](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: TEA CLUB OPENS DISCUSSION OF BERLIN JCMB AGENDA

REF: 06 KABUL 5932

Classified By: AMB Ronald E Neumann for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

(U) This is an Action Message; please refer to Para 12.

1.(C) SUMMARY: The January 8 Tea Club meeting established the outline for agendas for the Berlin January 30 JCMB political directors meeting and the January 31 JCMB meeting. First day issues are likely to include: approval of Spain's JCMB membership application, ISAF's report on its strategy for Afghanistan, reform of GOA security forces including Interior Ministry civil administration, judicial sector reform, counternarcotics implementation, and planning for the next round of national elections. The January 31 agenda will arise from the ongoing consultative group/working group process which is scheduled to conclude on or about January 120. Although fitting more naturally into the second day menu, budget and power issues could also arise in the first day's conversations. According to the German Ambassador, participation will be principal plus two for each meeting, with capitals determining delegations for the first day and diplomatic missions to Kabul providing delegations for the second day.  
END SUMMARY.

UNAMA OVERVIEW OF BERLIN JCMB

2.(C) UNAMA Deputy SRSG Alexander hosted a Tea Club meeting to discuss preparations for the Berlin JCMB meeting at the end of January and the Embassy's White Paper on Energy Policy (Septel). Alexander noted that the Berlin meeting would be augmented by political representation from capitals, but stressed that UNAMA hoped that development agency representatives would be part of participant delegations for the second day's meeting. For the GOA, Alexander reported that the Afghan Oversight Committee would attend and would probably be accompanied by appropriate representatives from the ministries of Defense, Counternarcotics, and Interior. It was not yet clear whether these ministries would be represented at the ministerial level. Afghan JCMB Co-Chair Nadiri had just returned to Afghanistan on January 7, so the

GOA preparation process could commence.

3.(C) Alexander suggested that the political director meeting scheduled for the afternoon of January 30 presented an opportunity to take stock of progress to date and to redirect coalition efforts to address new challenges, including filling funding gaps that the JCMB process has identified. Alexander indicated that ISAF will present a report outlining its strategy for Afghanistan to the JCMB political directors meeting. He suggested that, in addition to reviewing plans and programs to reform the GOA security forces (a report on ANP/ANAP deployment and exit strategy will be submitted), political directors could look at judicial sector reform (paper on Justice Ministry capacity building) including pay increases; reform of the Interior Ministry's civil administration (a noticable gap in current donor programming); and counternarcotics implementation (paper to be presented). On the second day, he said, the GOA intends to present a paper containing its vision for the way forward.

UNAMA would not present a paper. Alexander added that the next JCMB meeting would be held in Kabul in April in conjunction with the Afghan Development Forum.

4.(C) A subsequent discussion between Ambassador Neumann and UNAMA SRSK Koenigs made clear that ISAF and MOD would focus on the security situation, not/not the development of security forces. Neumann pointed out that the Afghan Security Force (ASF) development is a USG, not ISAF, main mission. Koenigs agreed that should the agenda change to discuss ASF training or development, the agenda would be restructured to include a USG-led briefing.

#### TECHNICAL BRIEFING ON JCMB SCHEDULE/PROCEDURES

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5.(C) The German Ambassador briefed that the political directors meeting would be held on January 30 and begin at 2 pm in the "World Hall" of the German Foreign Office. The end of the meeting would not be set. Participation would be principal plus two. Formal requests for accreditation should originate in capital and be addressed to JCMB co-chairs Nadiri and Koenigs. The German Foreign Ministry, as hosts of the meeting, should also be notified of respective delegations.

6.(C) On the structure of the meeting, The German Ambassador said that the German Foreign Minister would open the meeting with brief remarks, followed by remarks by UNAMA SRSK Koenigs and Afghan Foreign Minister Spanta. The meeting would focus on key political and strategic issues. Responding to a question from UNAMA, the German Ambassador said that no decision had yet been made on whether the political directors' discussion would be based on a paper circulated prior to the meeting or structured as an open-ended discussion based on a very precise agenda. He noted that the initial concept for the meeting was to be a forum for a strategic/political debate. He stressed that interventions would need to be short, crisp, disciplined messages so that all participants would have the opportunity to present their views. He added that because of the large size of the JCMB (22 members) and the long list of important issues to be addressed, the Germans would prefer not to allocate time for formal remarks by each representative.

#### DISCUSSION OF JCMB MEMBER AGENDA PROPOSALS

7.(C) The Italian Ambassador responded first to Alexander's opening the floor to JCMB member suggestions for the Berlin agenda. Noting that his Deputy Foreign Minister would be in Kabul the week of January 8-12, to discuss preparations for the Rome Rule of Law conference in February, he indicated that the Italian political director would probably announce the conference during the first day's meeting. No one objected to the World Bank rep's assertion that the JCMB Consultative Group process should produce the agenda for the

second day's meeting. In response to the Canadian representative's suggestion that ANA reform, the DIAG, and the ANDS Secretariat should be on the menu, Alexander said that ANA reform would certainly be a major issue discussed on the first day. He and the Japanese rep stated that a DIAG review is underway and implied it would not be ready for the Berlin meeting. Deputy SRSG and UNAMA JCMB Coordinator Ameerah ul-Haq said that resources for the ANDS secretariat could be sorted out in working level meetings in Kabul. Alexander responded to the Asia Development Bank rep that a formal stocktaking of the JCMB process would occur in April after the annual JCMB report is issued.

8.(C) Acting Econ Counselor suggested that the agenda should include preparation for the next set of national elections, budget execution, and planning for the financing of power distribution systems. He deferred to the more senior representatives present on which day's agenda would be most appropriate. Questioning whether the 2004/2005 national elections could be duplicated in the current security climate and that preservation of the constitutional process should be a high donor priority, the German Ambassador said the question of election preparations is an important political issue that should be on the agenda. Alexander agreed, noting that Afghanistan's independent election commission lacked leadership at the moment and needed capacity building. He added that it would not be possible to hold national elections this year based on the old voter registration system. A new civil voter registry needs to be conducted in order to tie voters to specific voting districts, if not polling places. However, he commented that it should be possible to hold a few municipal elections by the end of calendar year 2007. In terms of financing the 2008/2009 national elections, Alexander noted that UNAMA's debt from

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running the 04/05 election has yet to be fully retired and donors need to factor into their calculations that the election commission is now funded from the GOA budget. (COMMENT: The discussion of the next election would be a useful opportunity to remind the international community of the need for money now to keep the electoral machinery functioning. END COMMENT).

9.(C) Tea Club participants agreed that budget execution and capacity building for it, along with aid effectiveness and external budget expenditures should be on the agenda. There was also consensus that the power sector should be discussed in Berlin. The German Ambassador emphasized the point in the Embassy's White Paper (septel) that delivering power to Kabul and other major population centers needs to happen before the next general elections.

#### SPAIN'S APPLICATION FOR JCMB MEMBERSHIP

10.(C) The Tea Club also reviewed Spain's application for JCMB membership. Responding to the World Bank rep's question about criteria for JCMB membership, Alexander noted that the London meeting had specified that key neighbors, donors, and troop contributors should be members. The Italian Ambassador noted that Spain is a large troop contributor and donor, and he asserted that including Spain would raise the JCMB's status. The EC rep stressed that Spain is playing an increasingly important role in the EC and in the international community. He added that Spain is the fifth largest troop contributor and a larger donor than some JCMB members. The German questioned whether adding Spain would make the JCMB more effective and whether it would stimulate further applications. He recommended that Spain's membership be approved but that a statement be issued explaining the criteria for acceptance. Noting that some diplomatic missions in Kabul are quite small, the UK rep emphasized that prospective members must be able to carry their share of the load in the consultative groups and working groups. He also suggested capping the number of members in the JCMB at 25 (current membership is 22). The Japanese rep stated that

Tokyo supports Spain's application. Because the Tea Club agenda was received on January 7, Post could not seek Department guidance on the question, so Acting Econ Counselor made no intervention. Alexander indicated that it would be the first item on the political director meeting agenda and that UNAMA would develop more objective membership criteria for discussion.

#### STRAW POLL OF AMBASSADORIAL PARTICIPATION IN BERLIN

11.(C) Responding to Alexander's request for an indication of ambassadorial participation in Berlin, the EC rep, German Ambassador, Canadian Ambassador, and ADB Country Director indicated their intention to attend. The World Bank rep said her country director would attend. Actin Econ Counselor added that Ambassador Neumann is planning to attend the meetings. The Japanese and UK reps said that the questions was being considered in light of competing obligations.

#### COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST

12.(C) The meeting provided a good starting point for shaping the agendas for the Berlin JCMB meetings. One additional issue that could be added might be budget flexibility, but we would need to submit Treasury's paper to the donor community for coordination. On the issue of Spain's JCMB membership, Post notes that it will increase European represntation in the JCMB to seven of the 23 members (after Spain joins). Nevertheless, we are inclined to accept Spain for the reasons cited in para 10, and because in our experience no country will take a hard negative position. However bilateral pressure for removal of caveats and more military assets would be appropriate. When finalized, Department should send the USGdel list to the political director's meeting to Embassies Kabul and Berlin for accreditation purposes. END

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COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST.  
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